

Juvenile Services Comprehensive Plan for Cass County, Nebraska

Years Covered in this Plan:
**January 1, 2009-December 31,
2011**

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CASS COUNTY

JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM ANALYSIS TOOL

(COMMUNITY PLANNING DECISION POINT ANALYSIS)

The Juvenile Justice System Analysis Tool (Tool) was developed by the Juvenile Justice Institute at the University of Nebraska at Omaha in conjunction with the Nebraska Crime Commission to assist in County Juvenile Services Comprehensive Planning.

The Tool consists of twelve areas of decision points that make up the formal juvenile justice system in Nebraska. Various factors are present at each decision point—oftentimes changing from year to year based on state or county dynamics within the system such as changes in policies, programs, and/or personnel.

There are formal factors dictating certain decision points in the system, such as statutory authority. In addition, each county or community has unique factors surrounding certain decision points within the local county juvenile justice system. Identifying such informal factors helps to understand and assess juvenile justice needs and issues in individual locales.

Available data might also inform the factors surrounding a data point. Anecdotal data might be compared with statistical data, for example, to assess the true state of the system. County data is assessed when applying the Tool where applicable.

Cass County

A Cass County Comprehensive Plan meeting was held March 2009. Those present included local representatives from the Cass County Sheriff's Office, Plattsmouth Police Department, the Cass County Attorney's Office, CASA, Health and Human Services/Office of Juvenile Services, and Plattsmouth Community Schools.

Each of the twelve decision points were discussed as they relate to the juvenile justice system in Cass County.

The following analysis names the decision point and states any *noteworthy* issue identified or problem acknowledged at the particular stage in Cass County. Not all decision points are commented on. An assessment of the Cass County data has been completed as part of applying the Tool. Such data is referenced throughout this report when necessary to fully analyze a certain decision point.

APPENDIX "A"
Juvenile Justice System Analysis Tool
March 2009

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NEBRASKA JUVENILE COURT REPORT - CASS COUNTY
(Nebraska Crime Commission)

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
ARRESTS	32	32	49
OFFENSES			
1st/2nd Degree Assault	0	1	0
3rd Degree Assault	14	10	6
Sexual Assault - 1st	0	0	1
Sexual Assault - 2nd	0	0	0
Burglary	2	3	0
Drug - Felony	0	1	0
Theft > \$1500	0	0	0
Theft < \$1500	0	1	1
Theft < \$500	1	2	9
Theft < \$200	8	5	11
Crim Mischief - Felony	0	1	0
Crim Mischief - Misd	3	2	6
Major Trespass	4	0	1
Forgery - Misd - Major	0	0	1
Weapon - Misd	0	0	0
Disturbing Peace	1	2	11
Other Felony	0	0	2
Other Misdemeanor	20	22	20
Truancy	1	0	0
Ungovernable Behavior	2	10	14
Possession of Alcohol	27	5	18
Other Status	0	0	0
Neglect	13	23	23
Dependent	0	2	1
Other/Unknown	10	10	16
TOTAL	106	100	141

Cass County Data

Juvenile court offense data for Cass County is provided for years 2005, 2006, and 2007 (Juvenile Court Reporting—Nebraska Crime Commission)¹. Arrest numbers for each year represent arrests made of 0 – 17 year-olds in each of the counties.

In 2007, according to OJJDP at <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/exapop/>, Cass County had a juvenile population (ages 0 – 17 years old) of 6,491, with 6,321 white, 83 black, 30 American Indian, and 57 Asian. In addition, 181 were identified as Hispanic and 6,310 Non-Hispanic.

¹

Juvenile Court Reporting (JCR)

The Nebraska Crime Commission's Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) collects information from the courts on juveniles processed through the juvenile justice system. Approximately 8,000 juvenile cases a year receive final disposition or judgments which are reported to the Crime Commission by paper forms and by the computerized court system JUSTICE. Various statistics are compiled from these data by the SAC for use in juvenile justice planning. Data are provided back to local and state agencies, policy makers, the courts, [National Center for Juvenile Justice](#) and federal Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Nebraska Juvenile Court Data Set

Juvenile court information has been submitted to the Crime Commission on an ongoing basis for over 20 years. When a case reaches a disposition, meaning finality with concern to the court proceedings, a data collection form is completed and forwarded to the Crime Commission. The reported information is collected within the county court or by the probation office. There data typically include cases which have been handled with a formal petition having been filed. The statistics reported here by the Crime Commission only contain information on cases handled through a formal petition. The terms, cases, petitions and referrals may all be used describe the same group of juveniles processed. This does not necessarily represent all cases filed in juvenile court during those times; rather only those that received final a disposition or judgment. Information on pending cases is not included.

Decision Points:

Arrest/Citation (Police/Law Enforcement)

Whether an information report should be filed, or what offense, if any, under which juvenile should be cited or arrested

Whether to cite or arrest juvenile for juvenile or adult

Whether to take juvenile into custody or to cite and release

Notes:

Usually juveniles are cited and released to a parent or guardian. They are only detained if they are a danger to themselves or others.

Initial Detention (Probation)

Whether juvenile should be detained or released

Notes:

If a juvenile must be detained, the preference is for Cass County to utilize the Sarpy County facility. Secondly, the Madison County Detention facility is used. Sarpy County takes "good" candidates for detention (they will not take juveniles under a certain age, for example) and Douglas County generally does not take juveniles from Cass County. Madison County is then the only choice, and Madison County is very expensive.

Charge Juvenile (County Attorney)

Whether to prosecute juvenile

Notes:

Cass County operates an informal diversion program. Most misdemeanors, except for DUIs and drug-related offenses, are sent to the diversion program. The diversion coordinator admits participants on a case-by-case basis. After signing the diversion contract, the juvenile (with parents) completes community service hours, a decision-making class, tours the Cass County jail, and observes adult sentencings.

Whether youth should be prosecuted as juvenile or adult

Notes:

Offenses committed by juveniles are almost always filed in juvenile court. Adult court filings occur if the offense committed was highly egregious.

Offense(s) for which juvenile should be charged

Pre-Adjudication Detention (Juvenile Court Judge)

Whether juvenile detained at the time of citation/arrest should continue in detention or out-of-home placement pending adjudication

Probable Cause Hearing (Juvenile Court Judge)

Whether State can show that probable cause exists that juvenile is within the jurisdiction of the court

Notes:

A probable cause hearing only occurs when the juvenile is detained.

Competency Evaluation (Juvenile Court Judge)

Whether juvenile is competent to participate in the proceedings

Notes:

Competency is decided upon when brought forth by defense counsel.

Whether juvenile is "responsible" for his/her acts

Notes:

The younger an offender is, the more difficult it is to ascertain whether he/she is "responsible" for his/her acts. Guardian ad litem assist the court in making this decision on a case-by-case basis.

In terms of dealing with truancy in Cass County, the Plattsmouth Schools have a set process in place to work with the parents, then when the absences get to a certain level, referring it to the county attorney's office for juvenile court filing. The 1184 team has recently formed a county wide policy to deal with truancy. The school resource officer is called when there are 15 or 20 days of absences.

Adjudication (Juvenile Court Judge)

Whether juvenile is, beyond a reasonable doubt, "a person described by §43-247"

Notes:

The judge has his own informal probation to the court that he uses sometimes. The informal probation generally comprises of paying court costs, completing community service, maintaining attendance at school and submission of grades to the court. If all requirements are completed within the time period allowed, the juvenile need not appear again in court (in addition to these requirements the juvenile needs to avoid further law enforcement contacts).

Whether to order probation to conduct a pre-disposition investigation (PDI)

Notes:

PDIs are ordered on a case-by-case basis. If it is a first-time offender and drugs or alcohol are involved, a chemical evaluation will be ordered, and that is all. If there are several offenses, a PDI will be ordered.

Whether to order OJS evaluation

Whether to order a PDI and an OJS evaluation

Notes:

Both a PDI and an OJS evaluation are never ordered together in Cass County. A PDI is ordered first, and if Probation does not feel like help can be given through Probation, then an OJS evaluation is requested. Also, multiple offenses will push them towards an OJS evaluation.

Disposition (Juvenile Court Judge)

Whether to place juvenile on probation

Notes:

The court relies heavily on the Pre-Disposition Investigation in making this determination.

Whether to commit juvenile to the Office of Juvenile Services (OJS)

Notes:

Not many juveniles are sent to the Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center.

Whether to place juvenile on probation and commit juvenile to HHS or OJS

Notes:

This decision is based on various factors including but not limited to the age of the juvenile, circumstances of the offense, and the past record of offenses by the juvenile. Probation is presumptively used with first time offenders in the court system that need more structure than an informal probation or diversion can offer.

Administrative Sanctions (Probation)

Whether to impose administrative sanctions

Notes:

Electronic monitoring is available post-adjudication through OJS only, not Probation, so this may influence some decisions.

Motion to Revoke Probation (County Attorney)

Whether to file a motion to revoke probation

Notes:

The recommendation from Probation greatly influences the decision to file a motion to revoke probation.

If there is a mental health therapy need or medical need, the juvenile generally is committed to OJS, no matter the level of supervision needed as those services are available through OJS, not Probation. The YLS score is used in making these determinations.

Modification/Revocation of Probation (Juvenile Court Judge)

Whether to modify or revoke probation

Notes:

Probation may be extended, especially if there is agreement between both parties to do so.

Setting Aside Adjudication (Juvenile Court Judge)

Whether juvenile has satisfactorily completed his or her probation and supervision or the treatment program of his or her commitment

Notes:

When the term of Probation is up, a request is sent to the judge to dismiss because the juvenile has met the terms and conditions of Probation. Usually the judge will wait 3 – 6 months after the juvenile completes any treatment before closing the case.

Whether juvenile should be discharged from custody and supervision of OJS

Notes:

The judge will make the decision. OJS must write a full report and a discharge is made unless the juvenile has been at an YRTC, then the juvenile remains on OJS parole after appropriate time at the YRTC.

Summary:

Cass County juvenile justice professionals are a very committed group, working together to address the needs of youth across the continuum of services—from prevention to diversion to sanctions. Meetings of the 1184 Team occur frequently and routinely. The 1184 Team is where issues are addressed, new ideas are brought forth, and progress is made towards information-sharing and coordination of juvenile justice issues in Cass County.

Several prevention-type programs exist in Cass County. For example, DARE is in every school in the county, mentoring programs are available, and Project Extra Mile has a presence. A "Whiz Quiz" by Probation occurs randomly at schools throughout the county and happens through HHS. Counselors may then meet with kids in school. Trackers are also utilized through OJS.

Services, such as alcohol education classes or outpatient treatment and the like are available to residents in Cass County, but are not located in the county. To access services, residents travel to Lincoln or Omaha.

As a result of the discussions had for the juvenile system analysis in addition to the Hall County data that was examined, addressing the following issues may be considered:

1) Alcohol-Related Offenses

According to Cass County's offense data, possession of alcohol occurred frequently. Cass County is unique in addressing underage drinking by recently enacting a local ordinance to further deter underage drinking—Minor Under the Influence. It will be important to keep track of these specific offenses to report and utilize this particular offense data in the next 3-year county plan to help determine the deterrent or preventative affect of this new ordinance.

2) Electronic Monitoring In Lieu of Detention

A very limited amount of pre-adjudication detention options exist for juveniles in Cass County. Also, electronic monitoring is not readily available to juveniles on Probation. The option of electronic monitoring in both cases would be an excellent option in lieu of detention—both in terms of juveniles needing structure and cost considerations.

3) Utilization of a standardized assessment tool by diversion/county attorney's office

At this time, there seems to be no standardized process for juveniles being considered for the informal diversion program. A standardized screening process using an assessment tool such as the YLS/CMI could be used to develop a more efficient way to screen and case manage the

juveniles being considered. In addition, probation and OJS have both implemented the YLS/CMI into their investigatory and supervision policies which would allow for a continuum of risk and needs for a juvenile throughout the system—specifically in Cass County. This would also provide diversion an assessment tool to identify issues at the time of intake versus after the juvenile has been placed in the program.

4) Diversion Program Requirements

Part of the diversion program in Cass County is a tour of the local jail. Studies have shown tours of “lock-up” facilities have no deterring affect on juveniles, and tours such as these are not an evidence-based practice.

5) Truancy

The Cass County Attorney’s office and the 1184 Team have made great strides toward developing a truancy policy for all schools in Cass County as all schools have adopted the same policy. It is not feasible at this time to establish a truancy diversion program. County-wide school involvement collaborating with juvenile justice professionals to address the truancy problem is ongoing and highly recommended.

6) CASA

CASA is brand new in Cass County. The program has only been in operation a year and a half and is going strong. Continuation of the program is important as it lends an independent ear to the judge when needed. The CASA program currently has fourteen volunteers that are all trained and appointed to specific cases within the juvenile court system. These volunteers address the needs of a combined total of thirty-two children in Cass County.

APPENDIX "B"

Cass County LB 1184 Team Members

Last Name	First Name	Company	Job Title	Address	Phone	E-mail Address
Allen	Linda	Louisville Elementary	Guidance Counselor	PO Box 489 Louisville, NE 68037	234-4215	LAllen@esu3.org
Ayala	Sabrina	Plattsmouth High School	Guidance Counselor	1916 Hwy 34 Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-3322	sayala@plattsmouthschools.org
Bickford	Dawn	Weeping Water School	Guidance Counselor	204 W. O St. Weeping Water 68463	267-2445	dbickford@esu3.org
Burke	Larry	Cass County Sheriff's Office		336 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-9370	ike@co.cass.ne.us
Carrera	Kim	Cass County CASA	Director	Cass County Courthouse 346 Main St. Plattsmouth, NE 68048	296-9520	casa@cassne.org
Cox	Nathan	Cass County Attorney's Office	County Attorney	346 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-9346	nathanc@cassne.org
Drake	Alice	Region 6	Youth Services Coordinator	3801 Harney Street Omaha NE 68131	444-4989	adrake@regionsix.com
Duerr	Laura	Health & Human Services	Case Worker	546 Ave. A Plattsmouth NE 69048	296-0000	

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Durkan	Douglas	Cass County Sheriff's Dept.	Investigator	336 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048		
Eledge	Kathy	Med Center	CMA	1938 Hwy 34 East Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-6009	lwilwerd@unmc.edu
Fitzpatrick	Bill	Plattsmouth Schools	School Social Worker	1724 8th Ave Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-3174	bfitzpatrick@plattsmouthschools.org
Friederich	Bruce	Elmwood/Murdo ck Elementary School	Principal	400 West F, POB 100 Elmwood NE 68349	994-2125	bfriedrich@esu3.org
Gegg	Brian	Weeping Water School	Superintenda nt	P.O. Box 206 Weeping Water NE 68463	267-2445	bgegg@esu3.org
Hall	Kim					khall@plattsmouthschools.org
Hazuka	Father Jeremy	Lordes Central Catholic Schools	Principal	412 Second Ave. Nebraska City 68410-1799	873-6145	hazukacdolinc.net
Heinen	David	Plattsmouth Community Schools	Guidance Counselor	1916 Hwy 34 Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-3322	dheinen@plattsmouthschools.org
Heinen	David	Plattsmouth High School	Guidance Counselor	1915 E Hwy 34 Plattsmouth NE 68048		dheinen@plattsmouthschools.org
Isaacson	Linda	St. John's School	Principal	500 S. 18th Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-6230	lindai@stjohnpltt.org

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Jacobsen	Renee	Plattsmouth Community Schools	Superintendent	1912 E Highway 34 Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-3361	rjacobson@plattsmouthschools.org
Johnson	Kelly	Eagle Elementary School	Guidance Counselor	600 S 1st Eagle NE 68347	781-2210	kejohnso@esu6.org
Kennan	Andrew	Plattsmouth Police	Detective	346 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048		akennan@plattsmouth.org
Lahm	Brad	Sheriff's Office		336 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-9370	brad@co.cass.ne.us
Lamprecht	Dave	Sheriff's Office		336 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-9370	dave@co.cass.ne.us
Leach	Jeff	Cass County Probation	Probation Officer	346 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-9363	leach@cassne.org
Leffler	Deb	Conestoga School	Guidance Counselor	104 East High, POB 68 Murray, NE 68049	235-2341	dleffler@esu3.org
Lewis	Leroy	Plattsmouth Police	Police Officer	336 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048		
Mathews	Judith	UNMC	Pediatric Psychologist	1938 E Hwy 34 Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-6009	jrmathew@unmc.edu
Matsuda	Betty	Health & Human Services	Case Worker	546 Ave. A Plattsmouth NE 69048	296-0000	betty.matsuda@nebraska.gov

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Meneses	Justin	Health & Human Services	Case Worker	546 Ave. A Plattsmouth NE 69048	296-0000	
Morris	Kim	Med Center	CMA	1938 Hwy 34 East Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-6009	sparky_kimorris@yahoo.com
Murdoch	Dave	Plattsmouth P.D.	Police Sergeant	336 Main St Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-9370	dmurdoch@plattsmouth.org
Novak	Dan	Elmwood- Murdoch H.S.	Superintenda nt	300 Wyoming Murdock NE 68407	867-2341	dnovak@esu3.org
Osterloh	Cindy	Louisville Public Schools		202 W 3rd Louisville NE 68403	234-3585	costerloh@esu3.org
Paulsen	Brian	Plattsmouth P.D.	Police Chief	336 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-9363	bpaulsen@plattsmouth.org
Peters	Sue	Child Advocacy Center	Child Advocate	3200 Sumner Lincoln NE 68502	476-3200	sue@smvoices.org
Petersen	Eva	Cass County Sheriff's Dept.	Investigator	336 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048		
Petry	Byron	Plattsmouth Middle School	Guidance Counselor	1724 8th Ave Plattsmouth NE 68048		bpetry@plattsmouthschools.org
Rikli	Tammy	Cass County Attorney's Office	Diversion Officer	346 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-9340	tammyr@cassne.org

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Roach	Judy	Louisville H.S.	Guidance Counselor	202 W 3rd Louisville NE 68403	234-3585	jroach@esu3.org
Roberts	Vicki	Plattsmouth Head Start	Nurse Manager	1912 Hwy 34 Plattsmouth NE 68048	295-5250	vroberts@plattsmouthschools.org
Schenck	Earl	Cass County Sheriff's Dept.	Investigator	336 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-9370	earls@co.cass.ne.us
Scott	Tina		Physician			tscott@unmc.edu
Siemonsma	Jenny	Med Center	RN	1938 Hwy 34 East Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-6009	lwilwerd@unmc.edu
Simpson	Cary	Child Advocacy Center		3200 Sumner Lincoln NE 68502	476-3200	cary@smvoices.org
Snyder	Sheilah	Med Center	Physician	1938 Hwy 34 East Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-6009	sjsnyder@unmc.edu
Stander	Leanne	Plattsmouth Head Start		902 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-5250	hslas@aol.com
Steinkruger	Keryl	Plattsmouth Schools	School Social Worker	1724 8th Ave Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-4173	ksteinkruger@plattsmouthschools.org
Sullivan	Paul	Cass County Attorney's Office	Deputy Cass County Attorney	346 Main Street Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-9346	pauls@cassne.org

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Urton	Kelly	Conestoga School	Guidance Counselor	8404 42nd Street Murray 68409	235-2271	kurton@esu3.org
Wahlmeier	Mary	Child Advocacy Center	Case Coordinator	3200 Sumner Lincoln NE 68502	476-3200	marybeth@smvoices.org
Welsh	John	Health & Human Services	Case Worker	546 Ave. A Plattsmouth NE 69048	296-0000	john.welsh@nebraska.gov
Wetenkamp	Becky	Plattsmouth Middle School	Nurse	1724 8th Ave Plattsmouth NE 68048	296-3174	bwetenkamp@plattsmouthschools.org
Wilson	Janet					jwilson@plattsmouthschools.org
Wilwerding	Laura	University Medical Associates	Physician	1938 East Hwy 34 Plattsmouth NE 68048		lwilwerd@unmc.edu
Yenney	Heather	Health & Human Services	Case Worker	546 Ave. A Plattsmouth NE 69048		heather.yenney@hhss.ne.gov
Zimmer	Brenda	Sarpy County Probation	Probation Officer	1257 Golden Gate Dr., Suite 5- W Papillion NE 68046	593-2222	bzimmer@sarpy.com

Community Team

The community team for Cass County consists of the members of the LB1184 Treatment Team. The team members are representatives from various agencies and other components of the county that deal with juvenile issues. These include the various county school districts, doctors, medical students, nurses, and other medical professionals from local clinics and doctor's offices, law enforcement officers from the Cass County Sheriff's Department and the Plattsmouth Police Department, probation officers, Nebraska HHSS Protection and Safety Workers, Office of Juvenile Services workers, domestic violence victim's advocates, and members of the Cass County Attorney's Office, including the Cass County Attorney and one Deputy Cass County Attorney.

The Community Team has met since County Attorney Nathan B. Cox took office as the Cass County Attorney in 2000. Previous to that time meetings were held but there is no information on the frequency or format of the meetings. Meetings are currently held on the third Monday of each month and are directed by the Nathan Cox. The County Attorney is responsible for the statutory requirements of the meetings. The list of Community Team members and their information is attached to this Juvenile Services Comprehensive Plan as *Appendix "B."*

Community Socio-Economic Factors

Cass County is bordered on the east by the Missouri River and on the north by the Platte River. The southern border of Cass County is shared with Otoe County and the western end of the county is bordered by Lancaster County. The largest city in Cass County is Plattsmouth, which is also the county seat; other towns are Eagle, Alvo, Union, Cedar Creek, Louisville, Manley, Murdock, Murray, Nehawka, Weeping Water, Avoca, South Bend, and Elmwood. Cass County also includes portions of Ashland and other areas of note such as Beaver Lake, which is considered part of Plattsmouth. The county has major arteries for travel including sections of I-80, Highway 75, Highway 34, and Highway 50, as well as several main railroad lines used by the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe, Union Pacific, and Amtrak railroads. Cass County is largely agricultural, however there are a number of manufacturing sites in the county such as Ash Grove Cement, Ox Bow Pet Products, Stock Seed, and Martin Marietta Aggregates.

According to the 2000 United States Census, the general demographics of Cass County are as follows:

SEX AND AGE

Male	12,028 49.4
Female	12,306 50.6
Under 5 years	1,699 7.0
5 to 9 years	1,937 8.0
10 to 14 years	1,971 8.1
15 to 19 years	1,781 7.3
20 to 24 years	1,102 4.5
25 to 34 years	2,898 11.9
35 to 44 years	4,157 17.1
45 to 54 years	3,507 14.4
55 to 59 years	1,292 5.3

60 to 64 years	990 4.1
65 to 74 years	1,601 6.6
75 to 84 years	980 4.0
85 years and over	419 1.7
Median age (years)	36.9
18 years and over	17,542 72.1
Male	8,545 35.1
Female.	8,997 37.0
21 years and over	16,702 68.6
62 years and over	3,573 14.7
65 years and over	3,000 12.3
Male	1,259 5.2
Female.	1,741 7.2

RACE

One race	24,111 99.1
White	23,821 97.9
Black or African American	43 0.2
American Indian and Alaska Native	72 0.3
Asian	85 0.3
Asian Indian	7 -
Chinese.. . . .	7 -
Filipino	21 0.1
Japanese.	14 0.1
Korean.	25 0.1
Vietnamese.	3 -
Other Asian 1	8 -
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.	4 -
Native Hawaiian.	2 -
Guamanian or Chamorro	1 -
Samoan.	- -
Other Pacific Islander 2	1 -
Some other race	86 0.4
Two or more races	223 0.9

(Source- U.S. Census Bureau Website)

The U.S. Census estimates for 2006-2008 show slight growth in the county with the population growing less than one thousand people, however the percentages from the 2000 census in relation the number of males and females in the county remains basically the same.

Community Planning Tool

The Community Planning Tool is attached to this Juvenile Services Comprehensive Plan as *Appendix "A."*

Identified Priority Areas

CASA Program-

The implementation of the CASA program was the number one priority area identified in the previous plan submitted by Cass County. At this time the CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) program is up and running in Cass County. Currently there are fourteen trained volunteers that are appointed to thirty-two children who have been abused or neglected. The current CASA Director for Cass County is Kim M. Carrera. The continued operation and continued expansion of the CASA program in Cass County is the primary priority identified in this plan. The statistics relating to this priority are as follows:

Cass County CASA Program	Dates:7/1/07-12/31/07	Dates:1/1/08-12/31/08	Dates:1/1/09-12/31/09
Total number of referrals	29	8 NEW	24 NEW
Total number of youth accepted into the program	29	8	24
Total number of youth carried over from previous quarter	0	29	25
Total number of youth attending program	29	37	49
Total number of CLOSED CASES within given dates	0	12	32
OUTCOME of Closed Cases			
Returned to Parents (Reunification)	0	6	12
Removed from Docket	0	2	5
Adoption	0	3	8
Placed with legal guardians	0	0	5

Case transferred to another jurisdiction	0		0		2	
Death of Child	0		1		0	
RACE/ETHNICITY	Referred	Accepted	Referred	Accepted	Referred	Accepted
White	26	26	33	33	46	46
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black or African American	3	3	3	3	2	2
Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	0	1	1	1	1
GENDER	Referred	Accepted	Referred	Accepted	Referred	Accepted
Male	11	11	15	15	24	24
Female	18	18	22	22	25	25
AGE	Referred	Accepted	Referred	Accepted	Referred	Accepted
0-5	6	6	10	10	18	18
6-10	10	10	12	12	19	19
11-15	10	10	10	10	10	10
16-19	3	3	4	4	2	2

CASA in Cass County

- As of December 31, 2009, 14 CASA volunteers were advocating for 17 of Cass County's abused and neglected children.
- As of December 31, 2009, 15 children in Cass County are on a waiting list for CASA services.
- During July 2007 through December 2009; 61 children have received services of a Court Appointed Special Advocate.

CASA in Nebraska

- As of December 31, 2009, 404 CASA volunteers were advocating for 674 of Nebraska's abused and neglected children.
- As of December 31, 2009, 1436 children are on a waiting list for CASA services.
- The average annual CASA program cost per child served is \$1,020.
- The average annual CASA program cost per volunteer is \$2,450 (for recruitment, training, supervision, and continuing education).
- 20 local CASA programs are currently serving 37 counties in Nebraska.
- CASA has been in Nebraska for over 20 years.

Secure Detention Alternative- Electronic Monitoring-

The use of electronic monitoring, also known as home detention or house arrest is accomplished through the use of ankle bracelets that can be tracked via the use of a monitor attached to a phone line. The only options available in Cass County at this time for juveniles charged under Neb. Rev. Statute §43-247 (1) and (2) are placement at home or into a secure facility. Status offenders under Neb. Rev. Statute §43-247(3)(b) cannot be detained on the basis of status offense behavior alone, however electronic monitoring is an alternative to placing the child in a shelter or other out of home placement pending court action. The addition of electronic monitoring gives a third option that is appropriate where a juvenile needs a higher level of supervision but does not need to be detained in a secure facility. There is currently a provider for this service, the Boys and Girls Home that can cover Cass County (as a third party contractor). There is currently a federal grant that pays for a portion of pre-adjudication electronic monitoring; however, this will not cover status offenders due to restrictions on that funding. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services will assist families that cannot afford the required phone under this program so they will not be penalized due to economic status.

The goal at this time is to have effective pre-adjudication electronic monitoring in place to alleviate the restrictions and costs associated with detention. In addition the use of electronic monitoring on status offenders would be beneficial to prevent removal from the family home and placement in a youth shelter or foster care.

Cass County does not have its own juvenile detention facility at this time. Due to the courts having limited detention options, it would benefit Cass County to research the possibility of implementing electronic monitoring for the majority of these cases. The implementation of this feature would assist Cass County in maintaining some juvenile offenders in their homes rather than in a detention facility by the ability to monitor their whereabouts and provide accountability for their activities, especially while their cases are pre-adjudication. This priority area is also identified in previous plans and represents the least restrictive alternative to placement in a juvenile facility while maintaining public safety interests. In recent years Cass County has been forced to send juveniles to detention facilities in Sarpy County, Douglas county, Lancaster County, and Madison County, for purposes of detaining juveniles. While electronic monitoring is not appropriate in all cases, most of these juveniles would have been eligible for continued placement inside the home if there were a means of monitoring their whereabouts on a twenty-four hour a day basis. In addition to the above mentioned factors affecting the choice of placement vs. the need to monitor the juvenile offender is the amount of stress this situation places on the family of the offender as well as possible negative impact on the juvenile's attitude toward the case and his or her response to treatment. If the county program reduces stress and improves the juvenile's response the eventual cost to the county can be reduced not only by the more effective placement in the home, but through the successful resolution of cases and lack of recidivism in the court system.

Statistics in this priority area relate to the amount of money spent by the county

housing juveniles in facilities outside of the county as well as other factors that include but are not limited to transport costs to the Cass County Sheriff such as fuel, vehicle wear, and overtime. According to the Cass County Court, during 2007, there was a total of nine juveniles housed at the above listed facilities with the actual number of children placed in each is seven in the Sarpy County Juvenile Justice Center, and two placed into the North East Nebraska Juvenile Services facility located in Madison County. During 2008, the number of juveniles placed into secure facilities was eight, with five in Sarpy County and three in Madison County. It should be noted that the overall length of stay in these facilities was shorter in 2008, resulting in less cost to the county. During 2009, the total number of juveniles housed in secure facilities was nine, with seven placed in Sarpy County, and two placed in Madison County. One juvenile housed in Sarpy County during 2009 stayed for fifty-one days, resulting in a cost to Cass County of \$8,670.00.

According to information gathered from the Cass County Clerk and the Cass County Court, the actual housing costs to Cass County for placement of juveniles into secure holding facilities for the years 2007, 2008, and 2009, are as follows:

2007: Sarpy County, Nebraska (Juvenile Justice Center).....	\$15,300.00
N.E. Nebraska Juvenile Services (Madison County).....	\$2,550.00
Total 2007 Juvenile Housing Detention Costs.....	\$17,850.00
2008: Sarpy County, Nebraska (Juvenile Justice Center).....	\$2,040.00
N.E. Nebraska Juvenile Services (Madison County).....	\$2,178.75
Total 2008 Juvenile Housing Detention Costs.....	\$4,188.76
2009: Sarpy County, Nebraska (Juvenile Justice Center).....	\$19,550.00
N.E. Nebraska Juvenile Services (Madison County).....	\$1,923.75
Total 2009 Juvenile Housing Detention Costs.....	\$21,473.75

County Wide Truancy Policy

The Cass County Attorney and LB 1184 Team has been working with the various school districts in the county (public and private) to maintain an effective truancy policy for all schools in Cass County. This was an identified Priority in the previous plan and is currently implemented countywide. Concerns and feedback on the current policy continue at the LB1184 meetings each month in an effort to improve and refine the truancy policy. The goal of the group was to formulate a truancy policy to provide a concentrated effort at early intervention to what has been determined to be an at risk population. Because truancy is often an indicator of future problems, the school districts in Cass County continue to work with the county attorney and law enforcement agencies at identifying at risk students. Efforts are then made to prevent future problems by offering services faster in the hope that the children will remain in school and receive their education. Grant funding for personnel to provide intervention and law enforcement where needed is necessary in those areas of Cass County that are not served by a school resource officer. The use of instruments such as the YLS/CMI instruments to assess the risks and needs of juveniles with truancy issues would benefit the County Attorney and schools in deciding what further steps are needed. Students who remain habitually truant and their parents can be brought before the court to answer for the truancy after the opportunity to avail themselves of services has failed and there is no other recourse.

The policy currently in place relies on the schools to make referrals to the Cass County Attorney's Office when a juvenile reaches a predetermined number of absences from school. The number of absences currently being used is a total of ten in a school year, with exceptions being made on the school level for cases of medically documented illnesses. The statistics relating to this area show that in 2008, there were four truancy cases filed as a result of school district referrals to the County Attorney. All four of these cases resulted in a §43-247(3)(b) filing in the Cass County Court, with the children eventually being adjudicated and placed under the Court's jurisdiction. In 2009, with the policy in full effect, there were eighteen cases filed in Cass County Court as a result of referrals from the various school districts in the county as well as one in regard to a Cass County resident who attends school outside the county and received a referral from that school district (Waverly). Of the eighteen cases filed in 2008, ten were adjudicated resulting in the juvenile coming under the jurisdiction of the court. The remaining eight cases were dismissed after a period of attendance monitoring by the county attorney and court that resulted in greater compliance with the attendance policies by students and/or parents.

Strategies

CASA Program-

As stated above, strengthening the CASA program in Cass County is the number one priority in the Cass County Juvenile Services Comprehensive Plan. This important goal will be accomplished through the continued recruitment, training and on-going supervision of volunteers from the community who are appointed by Juvenile Court or County Court Judges to serve as Court Appointed Special Advocates for children involved in the abuse and neglect cases through the juvenile courts. The current director, Kim M. Carrera, has engaged in an ongoing effort to recruit and train volunteers and have them appointed to cases. The use of grant funding is the primary support mechanism for the CASA program in Cass County.

Time Schedule	Priority #1: <i>Strengthening the CASA program.</i> Identified Strategies	Expected Results
Spring 2009 Spring 2010 Spring 2011	Executive Director of the Cass County CASA Program will recruit, screen, and provide training for NEW volunteers annually.	Increase the number of sworn-in volunteers; this will allow more children to receive services.
On going	Executive Director will provide in service training for current volunteers (12 hours annually).	Maintain current volunteers and to increase their knowledge and passion for child abuse advocacy.
On going	Board of Directors will help seek funding through available grants and donors.	Apply for additional grants and appeal to more private donors.
On going	Cass County CASA will continue to gather community support through available media outlets.	Increase community awareness of the CASA Program and gain support.

Secure Detention Alternative- Electronic Monitoring-

In determining the appropriate level of detention for a juvenile it is the important that the least restrictive alternative be employed to assure the safety of both the minor child and the community. Implementing an alternative to detention would allow for better use of funding as well as more services to be provided to the same juveniles who are being monitored such as tracker services and mentor programs.

The year one strategy of this identified priority area of the Plan would be to implement the electronic monitor program. The needs of the program in regard to employees and other factors would need to be determined, however, this service is mostly contracted out to third parties with the assistance of NDHHS, who already has experience in this area. Parties involved in the program would need to coordinate with outside elements that can become involved, especially the local school districts in Cass County. Not only will the schools need to be aware of the monitors for safety reasons, they can assist in monitoring of the juvenile during school hours. Another important aspect of implementing this program will be to educate the parties potentially affected. This includes the judges, school personnel, and service providers involved in the treatment of the juvenile. It is important to remember that electronic monitoring in and of itself is not rehabilitative, however it does assist in rehabilitation by making treatment options more flexible and less stressful.

In order to implement the program during the first year of the Plan, the following questions need to be answered:

1. Outsource the service or keep it in-house?
2. Which type of equipment to purchase or lease?
3. Can the equipment be used on a trial basis?
4. Does the vendor provide training, and is there an extra fee for this service?
5. Who provides maintenance for the monitoring equipment?
6. Does the equipment get upgraded on a regular basis?

In years two and three of the plan, the goal after the system has been implemented will be to maintain the equipment in place and remain in a constant state of readiness so that new juveniles can be added and removed from the system with a minimum of problems. New personnel can be trained on an as needed basis and upgrades in technology and changes in procedure can be reviewed annually at a minimum in order to facilitate the success of the system. If the program is successful, additional funding can be sought for additional monitors to expand the program.

County Wide Truancy Policy-

In year one of the Plan, the goal was formulation and implementation of the truancy policy. In order to accomplish this, the Cass County Attorney's Office met with school administrators and other education professionals as well as members of the UNMC Clinic in Plattsmouth to formulate a policy that would appeal to schools across the county. This was accomplished and in year two the plan was implemented by schools in Cass County. The plan was met with questions and implementation was slow as individual school districts had specific issues addressed and the truancy policy was refined to meet each district's needs. Currently, the best example of the truancy policy being implemented is in the Plattsmouth School District. The Plattsmouth School District makes regular referrals to the Cass County Attorney and works to provide documentation of the district's efforts to address truancy issues prior to sending the matter for enforcement action. The continued use and enforcement of the policy is ongoing and will continue during the length of the plan. If circumstances change in regard to the law or other factors affecting the truancy policy, the LB1184 team members can address the new circumstances and make necessary changes in order to best serve the needs of the schools and students.